EXCISE 698
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CHIEF OF STAFF

Congress of the United States
Committee on Foreign Affairs
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

April 3, 1980

ACTION
is assigned to
EUR

The Honorable J. Brian Atwood
Assistant Secretary of State
for Congressional Relations
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Atwood:

I am enclosing a copy of a communication I have received from one of my constituents on the current status of Spandau Prison in West Berlin and its sole inmate, Rudolf Hess, together with my interim response.

I would appreciate having the Department's comments on this matter, as set forth in the third paragraph of my letter.

Thank you for your attention.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Chairman

CJZ:jcy

Enclosures

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TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
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CHIEF OF STAFF

Congress of the United States
Committee on Foreign Affairs
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

April 1, 1980

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Dear [redacted]

Thank you for sending me a copy of the Milwaukee Journal articles on Rudolf Hess, together with your comments. I fully agree that there is no rational justification for the continued imprisonment of this ailing 85 year-old man -- long after all other convicted War Criminals either have been released or have died. The cost of maintaining this facility is also exorbitant, as you pointed out.

It is my understanding that this anachronistic situation stems from the four-power agreements governing the status of Spandau Prison since the end of World War II. While the allies have long sought Mr. Hess's release, the Russians who have joint legal responsibility for the operation of Spandau and the disposition of its inmates have adamantly refused to concur in such a move; moreover, a unilateral withdrawal of allied guard forces would, it is feared, jeopardize Western rights and interests in West Berlin.

I have asked the Department of State to comment on this matter, however, and provide me with a full report on the status of Spandau Prison and the reasons for its continued operation. As soon as I have the Department's response, I will be back in touch with you.

Again, I appreciate your bringing this situation to my attention.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Chairman

CJZ:jcy

Russians and Americans.

Recently he attempted suicide. His French guards discovered it and prevented his death. "Is this surprising," Hess asked his son, "considering that I have been alone in this prison for 10 years and when I read that others convicted to life imprisonment are released after 15 years?"

Now 82 years old, Hess left Germany early in the war and flew to Britain seeking peace. Others guilty of much more heinous crimes are free. Hess would be free, too, if all but the Russians had their way. They refuse to agree to his freedom. The case becomes more brutal by the year. Certainly humanity and justice would be served by letting him go home and die in peace.

-- by now 12

THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
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Hess hunter

Milw. Journal 11-13-79

The Murder of Rudolf Hess. By W. Hugh Thomas. Harper & Row. $9.95.

By DANIEL P. HANLEY JR.
of The Journal Staff

DR. W. HUGH Thomas, who served as a consultant surgeon in the British Royal Army Medical Corps, contends in this book released earlier in Europe that he has uncovered what may be the greatest hoax of World War II.

Respected reporters and historians have told us that since July 18, 1947, Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy, has been languishing in Spandau Prison in West Berlin, serving a life term. They told us this man was sentenced for crimes committed in the service of the Third Reich before flying alone to Scotland May 10, 1941, allegedly to negotiate a separate peace with the British.

Thomas says that is nonsense and sets out to prove his case, in part using forensic science — just the way Quincy would solve a crime in his medical examiner television role.

The man in Spandau is an imposter, Thomas says. Hess was murdered subsequent to taking off in a Messerschmitt plane for Scotland and replaced by a double in another aircraft, according to Thomas.

Thomas gained expertise in gunshot wounds while serving with the British military in Belfast, Northern Ireland. While assigned to the British Military Hospital in West Berlin in 1973, Thomas twice examined the prisoner called Hess.

The German military file on Hess shows he suffered gunshot wounds to the left arm and in the chest area during service in World War I. Thomas says that his personal observations and x-rays of the man called Hess failed to reveal the scars that would have been left by such wounds.

From that point, Thomas details a litany of what he calls discrepancies and inconsistencies between what the real Hess would be like and the man known as Prisoner No 7, who is called Hess, the sole remaining inmate at Spandau at a cost of more than $1 million a year.

Fear of retribution by a still viable Nazi underground against his family is one reason cited by Thomas for the man called Hess, now 85 years old, to maintain the role.

Dame Rebecca West, the noted British writer, says in an introduction to the book that her first impulse was to reject totally the main thesis. She changed her mind.

"In this book Hugh Thomas has begun the unraveling of the greatest mystery of the Second World War," Dame Rebecca writes. "Now it is the duty of those who have consciences to take over where Mr. Thomas leaves it and ascertain by the simple tests this book suggests whether the demented survivor in Spandau is or is not Hess. It should be enquired also whether governments themselves have, with intent or through negligence, become parties to a foolish and wicked conspiracy."

Thomas contends that an independent medical examination of Prisoner No. 7 will reveal immediately the Hess hoax. It is that simple, he says.

Is there a doctor in the house?

Dear Mr. Pabloski:

Please, read the above and see to it that not 1 more cent is spent on this foolish project. To think that our tax money is used to degrade our servicemen, by having to guard this old man,... No wonder there is little faith in our leadership!

Please, let me know what you can do in this matter.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

RECEIVED
MAR 31 1980
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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